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GOVERNOR

Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES



Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw
COMMISSIONER

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statewide events recognize success, contributions of workers with disabilities

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, a program of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), will have 13 special events around the state as part of the October observance of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

The events will honor and celebrate the success and contributions of individuals with disabilities in the workforce and recognize businesses that provide opportunities for successful employment for people with disabilities. The theme for this year is “#Inclusion Works.”

“Like anyone else, people with disabilities can bring a range of skills, talents and abilities to the workplace,” said Peggy Anderson, ADRS administrator for business relations. “Inclusion works because it just makes good business sense.”

Awards will be presented in 12 different categories and will salute contributions from employers, community partners, youth, educators, advocates, the news media, and local professionals. More than 100 awards will be presented to 129 winners throughout Alabama. Local winners will compete for statewide recognition at a special event at the Capitol in December.

ADRS Commissioner Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw said when employers hire

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PROVIDING SERVICES TO ALABAMIANS WITH DISABILITIES

people with disabilities, it's good for everyone.

"At work, it's what people can do that matters, and we've seen that time and time again," she said. "When individuals with disabilities are included in a workplace, everyone benefits – from that person to his or her employer to the community as a whole."

Former Gov. Jim Folsom created the Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities in the late 1940s as a response to veterans with disabilities who returned home and were unable to find work. Since then, many individuals with disabilities – veterans as well as civilians – have benefitted from Governor's Committee activities. The committee coordinates a network of local volunteer groups throughout the state and works closely with ADRS staff to develop employment opportunities and raise awareness of the needs and rights of Alabamians with disabilities.

In fiscal year 2015, the department's Vocational Rehabilitation Service division provided services to 30,248 teens and adults with disabilities, assisting 4,602 of those in becoming successfully employed. Also in FY15, READI-Net, the department's business relations program, provided 6,411 no-cost services to 1,723 employers.

The mission of ADRS is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.

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NDEAM 2016 *Award Categories*

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR-SMALL BUSINESS (Fewer than 50 employees)

This award is public recognition of an individual who has demonstrated personal courage, motivation, and outstanding performance in overcoming obstacles in his/her personal rehabilitation and for dedication shown in productive employment.

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR-LARGE BUSINESS (50 or more employees)

This award is public recognition of an individual who has demonstrated personal courage, motivation, and outstanding performance in overcoming obstacles in his/her personal rehabilitation and for dedication shown in productive employment.

EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR-SMALL BUSINESS (Fewer than 50 employees)

This award is public recognition of a small business that has shown outstanding outreach, initiative, and performance in employment of people with disabilities.

EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR-LARGE BUSINESS (50 or more employees)

This award is public recognition of a large business that has shown outstanding outreach, initiative, and performance in employment of people with disabilities.

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

This award is public recognition of an educator who has significantly contributed to students with disabilities and demonstrated an ongoing interest in people with disabilities.

ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

This award is public recognition of an individual (such as a family member or volunteer) or rehabilitation professional who has demonstrated exceptional devotion to duty toward promoting self-advocacy, employment, and improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities.

PARTNERSHIP OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to a partner – such as a community service provider, state agency, business, organization or group – that has exhibited a strong commitment to activities resulting in greater alliances which benefit individuals with disabilities in employment-related activities.

MEDIA OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to a member of the media for continuing efforts to promote awareness of and to change attitudes toward people with disabilities.

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

This award is presented to a local elected or appointed official for their exceptional contributions on matters affecting people with disabilities.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

This award is presented to a youth with a disability, age 15-22, who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, positive motivation and a willingness to participate in service to others.

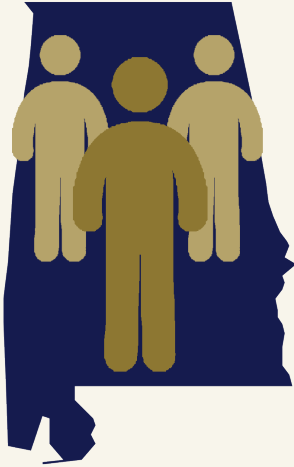
STUDENT OF THE YEAR

This award is presented to a student with a disability, who has demonstrated exemplary efforts in pursuit of their education and in overcoming limitations related to their disability in doing so, and was a student in good standing during the fiscal year in which they are nominated.

COLLABORATION

This award is presented to an individual or a team that has demonstrated the true spirit of cooperation via collaborative resources and networking on initiatives that contribute to the employment of individuals with disabilities.

ALABAMA'S TALENT POOL

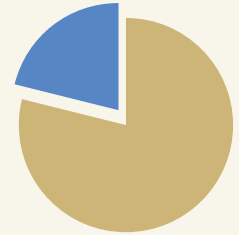


31.5%

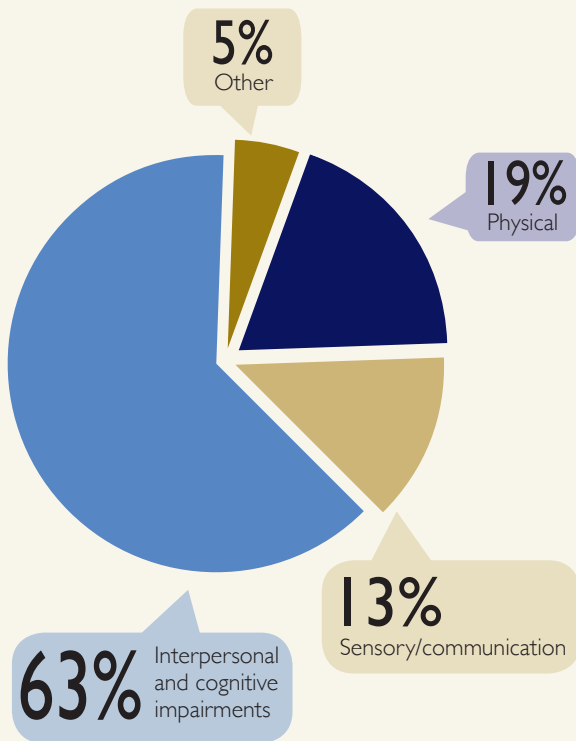
percentage of Alabamians reporting some sort of disability, according to a 2013 survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

79%

Percentage of disabilities not visible to others



Types of Disabilities



2,000+

number of candidates statewide ready to go to work on any given day



To post jobs for recruiting:

www.alabamabln.org or 205-290-4457



The Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of Disabilities is a program of the **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.**